

INDIAN SCIENTISTS VS. SCIENCE AND RELIGION

In an excellent article Swami Sarvabhutananda shows that Acharya J.C. Bose's research on the plant physiology was influenced by Indian religion and philosophy.¹ In this context it will be worth to see the cases of : M.N. Saha, S.N. Bose and C.V. Raman.

Once S.N. Bose was asked: Whether he was influenced by Indian philosophy, while deriving Planck radiation law by applying Albert Einstein's concept of light quanta? Bose found it absurd and told, "*so!, Yes, Indian philosophy had taught him a great deal; no, Indian philosophy had not influenced his physics (emphasis in original)*"²

M.N. Saha's biographers S. Chatterjee and E. Chatterjee wrote that a gentleman wanted to know about Saha's research work. When he started explaining, he was interpreted again and again with the comment. "*But this is nothing new, we have all this in the 'Vedas'.*" However, the gentleman, was unable to tell Saha, in which parts of the *Vedas* is the theory of ionisation. Such statements irritated Saha,³ whose scientific work was influenced by Agnes Mary Clerke - who wrote books on astronomy.⁴

Indian's Nobel Laureate C.V. Raman once disclosed that *The Sensations of Tone* by the Germany scientist H. Helmholtz, profoundly influenced his intellect. From that he learnt what research means and how to undertake it.⁵ Raman was a progressive believer. In one of his speeches he said that "*There is no Heaven, no Swarga, no Hell, no rebirth, no reincarnation and no immortality. The only thing that is true is that a man is born, he lives and he dies. Therefore, he should live his life properly*"

(Document No. RP-6.15, Courtesy Archive Raman Research Institute, Bangalore). What meant God for Raman is reported as follows: "*If there is a God, we must look for Him in the universe. If He is not there, He is not worth looking for.*"⁶

From the forgoing discussion, it can be said that contrary to J.C. Bose, the scientific works of S.N. Bose, C.V. Raman and M.N. Saha were not influenced by the Indian religion and philosophy. However, my result cannot be interpreted as the final statement as it is based on "only three case studies". In order to arrive a general conclusion on the topic a detail study is suggested.

References

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- 6 Editor, *Bhavan's Journal* **11**, 30-31 (1970).

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